

## Message Text

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ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /031 W

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R 161200Z SEP 74

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6897

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 12676

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, IT

SUBJECT: PCI PARTICIPATION IN THE GOVERNMENT

1. IN THE COURSE OF MY MEETING AT THE QUIRINALE FRIDAY EVENING WITH PRESIDENT LEONE TO DISCUSS HIS UPCOMING VISIT TO THE US (REPORTED SEPTEL), WE ALSO TALKED AT LENGTH ABOUT THE CURRENT POLITICAL DEBATE SURROUNDING THE ISSUE OF PCI PARTICIPATION IN THE GOVERNMENT. HE WAS VERY EMPHATIC IN HIS REJECTION OF THE POSSIBILITY. HE RECALLED HIS CONVERSATION WITH THE SECRETARY DURING HIS VISIT TO ROME AND REITERATED MUCH OF WHAT HE SAID THEN. HE SAID THAT THE PAST TWO MONTHS HAVE NOT SEEN ANY CHANGE IN HIS POSITION AND HE REMAINS ADAMANT IN HIS OPPOSITION TO THE "COMPROMESSO STORICO" AND FELT THERE WAS NO POSSIBILITY OF ITS HAPPENING.

2. I ASKED ABOUT THE SOCIALISTS ROLE IN THIS DEBATE AND HE TOLD ME TO DISCOUNT REPORTS I MAY HEAR ABOUT PSI ENTHUSIASM FOR PCI ENTRY INTO THE GOVERNMENT. AS FAR AS HE IS CONCERNED, THE PSI FULLY REALIZES THAT IT WOULD BE SQUEEZED OUT BY AN EMBRACE OF THE DC AND THE PCI AND AS A PARTY RENDERED USELESS AND MEANINGLESS. PRESIDENT LEONE IS CONFIDENT THAT THIS PRAGMATIC POLITICAL FACT IS WELL UNDERSTOOD BY THE SOCIALISTS AND THEY WILL REACT ACCORDINGLY. AS WE KNOW, PRESIDENT LEONE IS A CLOSE AND LONG-TIME FRIEND OF PSI SECRETARY DE MARTINO AND IT IS LIKELY THAT HE IS

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REFLECTING DE MARTINO'S VIEWPOINT.

3. I ASKED THE PRESIDENT IF HE HAD SEEN RESTON'S RECENT ARTICLE IN THE HERALD TRIBUNE INDICATING THAT OFFICIALS OF THE FRENCH AND GERMAN GOVERNMENTS HAVE COME TO THE CONCLUSION THAT ITALY SHOULD PERMIT PCI ENTRY INTO THE GOVERNMENT. HE HAD NOT SEEN IT BUT INDICATED THAT NO MEMBER OF THOSE GOVERNMENTS HAVE EVER APPROACHED THE ITALIANS WITH SUCH A SUGGESTION. HE WAS AMUSED AT THE THOUGHT THAT GISCARD D'ESTAING AFTER HIS NARROW VICTORY OVER MITERAND AND SCHMIDT WITH HIS WELL-KNOW ANTI-COMMUNIST VIEWS WOULD MAKE SUCH A PROPOSAL.

4. I TOOK THE OCCASION OF OUR DISCUSSION ON THIS ISSUE TO TELL PRESIDENT LEONE THAT MY LONG-PLANNED TRIP TO BOLOGNA WAS GOING TO TAKE PLACE IN A FEW DAYS. I SAID I HOPED NEITHER THE TIMING OF MY VISIT NOR MY PROTOCOL VISIT ON THE COMMUNIST MAYOR WOULD BE MISINTERPRETED. HE SAW ABSOLUTELY NO DIFFICULTY ON THIS SCORE AND INDICATED HIS BELIEF THAT THIS VISIT AND MY OTHER VISITS THROUGHOUT ITALY WERE HELPING TO KEEP BEFORE THE ITALIAN PUBLIC THE AMERICAN PRESENCE AND INTEREST IN ITALY. I TOLD THE PRESIDENT THAT THE PRINCIPAL PURPOSE OF MY TRIP TO BOLOGNA WAS TO VISIT WITH THE DIRECTOR, FACULTY AND STUDENTS OF THE JOHN HOPKINS CENTER AND ALSO TO SPEAK TO A JOINT MEETING OF THE LIONS CLUB AND THE ITALO-AMERICAN ASSOCIATION, AN ORGANIZATION WE ARE TRYING TO REVITALIZE. I WANTED HIM TO KNOW THAT IN MY REMARKS I WOULD BE INDICATING THAT ALTHOUGH ITALY'S APPROACHES AND SOLUTIONS TO ITS CURRENT ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL PROBLEMS WERE MATTERS FOR RESOLUTION BY THE ITALIANS THEMSELVES, I WOULD NOT SHRINK FROM SAYING THAT OUR GOVERNMENT FELT NO DRAMATIC NEW POLITICAL FORMULAS WERE NEEDED TO MEET THESE CHALLENGES. LEONE WAS VERY PLEASED WITH THIS LINE AND THOUGHT IT WOULD BE HELPFUL.

5. I CLOSED OUR MEETING WITH ONCE AGAIN EMPHASIZING TO THE PRESIDENT MY CONCERN OVER THE CURRENT SITUATION AND THE NEED THAT I SAW FOR THE DC TO REVITALIZE ITSELF  
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WITH NEW FACES AND NEW PROGRAMS. THE PRESSURE OF HIS SCHEDULE CUT SHORT THIS DISCUSSION. HE EXPRESSED HIS AGREEMENT AND HOPED WE COULD DISCUSS IT FURTHER AFTER HE RETURNS FROM HIS TRIP. VOLPE

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## Message Attributes

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